

REMARKS

Applicants appreciate the careful consideration and favorable examination of the present application in which claims 11, 14-19, 24-26, 29-34 and 36-46 have been allowed.

The remaining claims, namely, claims 20 and 22, stand rejected on prior art grounds; however, this rejection is moot in view of the present amendment in which claims 20 and 22 have been canceled without prejudice.

Accordingly, all of the remaining claims (11, 14-19, 24-26, 29-34 and 36-46) stand allowed and thus, the application is in condition for allowance.

In view of the above amendment, applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance which is earnestly solicited at this time.

On a related note, Applicants question the Finality of the present action since the present action is the first action *on the merits* and while Applicants submitted a preliminary amendment in combination with a response to the Restriction Requirement, this is proper since it was prior to receiving any action on the merits where prior art was applied. The Examiner contends that the Applicants' amendment necessitated the *new* ground of rejection; however, there were no previous grounds of rejection and therefore, Applicants question the Finality of the present action. However, since the present application is in condition for allowance, this should be a moot point; however, Applicants note it for the record.

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Respectfully submitted,

By 

Edward J. Ellis

Registration No.: 40,389

DARBY & DARBY P.C.

P.O. Box 5257

New York, New York 10150-5257

(212) 527-7700

(212) 527-7701 (Fax)

Attorneys/Agents For Applicant